

Heartfelt

want to see my heart
the boy asked without looking up
she stepped closer
as he reached into his knapsack
and pulled out something
wrapped in a worn bandana
laying it on the ground at her feet.
they stared for a moment
then he removed the covering
the heart was small
bruised and scarred, but strong
there was nothing sad
or grotesque about the heart
in fact it was somehow calming
reassuring in its slow even beat
she could not actually hear it
as much as feel it
as if it was beating in her
as if connected by some force

he slowly reached out and took her hand
they sat on the ground on the hill
the heart and the boy and the girl
looking out at the horizon
she realized she could feel it all
the trees, the clouds, the endless fields
as if they were all beating inside her
the feeling pulsed through her
filling her
she sat content, satiated, calm
need and want drained
dreading the moment to end
hoping if nothing changed
the feeling would last forever

17

they descended en masse
the feathery lot
the cat saw them coming
while I saw them not
what had drawn their attention
and to make such a scene
neither I nor the cat

we're able to glean
and then they moved on
just as quick as they came
was the cat disappointed
at the end of the game
i sensed his indifference
a little bit fake
but I paid him no mind
still in bed, wide awake.

I summoned the strength
to get up and get dressed
mulling over if to be
or not be, depressed
the sameness of life
often weighs on me heavy
still its living I do
everyday sure and steady
a pile of unread mail
sits on the table
and a chore list I wrote
(though I seldom am able)
is clipped to the fridge
next to old family photos
the difficult tasks
I tend to avoid those
i drag myself onto the porch
with my coffee
calling truce with what was,
and what is, and what will be
cat joins me out there
he's a cat of few words
so we just sit and stare
and we wait on the birds.

Negative Spaces

he saw his life in voids and spaces

till what was there, was dwarfed

by what was not , and

what had never been

occupied his waking moments.

fighting with a dragon of nothing

till he became exhausted

and he collapsed,

empty

into the cool grass.

it tickled the back of his neck.

staring up at stars

whose light had taken

so so long to get here

that he wept at its delay.

the night air filled his lungs

its weight pinned him to the ground
and at last he felt
the pain of her absence

Nature Path

she placed her young feet
so surely, thoughtlessly even
on the creaking boards
they, casually laid out across the marsh
her, immune from memories of falls,
unencumbered by doubt
and as she danced
he followed

his plodding measured steps
a foil to her lightness
everything about him heavy
the wood bending under his weight
feet meeting the rising water

till slipping seemed assured
and progress dragged
yet together they prevailed

and as the marsh gave way
to solid ground
she turned her face
upward toward the old man
her eyes smiling
no words, but a small hand
reaching back to him
he took her little fingers, gently

so this is how it would be
he thought to himself
his wisdom nothing more than baggage
following the brisk and eager
steps of youth
till all his plans retire
a journey's moment unsecured
down a path his aged eyes neglect

